The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present; it is thine.—Longfellow.

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RAILWAY BANKERS FAVOR HIGH WAGES

Washington, Aug. 8.—Railway bankers and their attorneys favor high wages—for themselves.

Last week they presented a bill for $2,364,249.79 for reorganizing the Missouri, Kansas & Texas railroad. They insisted that this was a "living wage," but the interstate commerce commission reduced their rates to a beggarly $900,000. The bankers receive $900,000 and the attorneys $600,000.

The award was so excessive that Commissioners Eastman, McManamy and Campbell filed a minority report. It was shown that one lawyer was classed as a $500-a-day man.

"Men receiving such compensation," said Commissioner Eastman, "usually entertain a righteous conviction that it corresponds with intrinsic worth, although, at the same time, they may be incensed that painters or carpenters should assume to demand and be able to exact $15 a day for their services."

Mr. Eastman called attention to other expenses that the bankers presented, although "the actual risk and burden in connection with the underwriting was insignificant."

The commissioner showed how stockholders "theoretically" dictate the policy of corporations, but this only applies where the stockholders are few and consist of large financial interests. He said it was "practically impossible" for many stockholders, with few holdings, to give careful heed to their corporation, "and its management falls into the hands of what is, in fact, a self-perpetuating board of directors."

TORY ELEMENT TO BACK PATERNALISTIC PLANS

Denver, Aug. 8.—The next congress will be flooded with paternalistic legislation backed by privilege, according to Huston Thompson, member of the federal trade commission.

Mr. Huston made this statement in an interview with the Colorado Labor Advocate, official paper of the state federation of labor.

While monopoly is shrieking against paternalism, it is preparing to more thoroughly centralize government that rulership by the people may be wiped out.

Maneuvering by the money interests during the past several months has placed them in a position of power, the federal commissioner declared, and they will lose no time to have legislation enacted which will permit them to legally maintain that power.

This tendency is shown by the majority members of the federal trade commission, who ruled that any firm found violating an anti-trust law would simply be requested secretly and allowed to continue business after promising to "never, never do it again."

The majority also ruled that no charges against a business concern to be investigated unless there is a joint resolution of both houses of congress providing for such investigation. Mr. Thompson pointed out that this would virtually tie the hands of the commission as a joint resolution is very rare, if not at all.

Under such a condition it would be necessary to prove a corporation guilty of a violation before an investigation could be started to prove it—an absurd situation.

Citizens are urged to note that the men who denounce centralization and paternalism in government never introduce legislation to check this tendency. On the contrary, they always vote for it.

SHOE REPAIRERS UNITE

Portland, Ore., Aug. 8.—Shoe repairers in this city have organized. They are chartered by the Boot and Shoe Workers' union.

PATRONAGE IS MATTER OF PERSONAL RELATION

In enjoining Scranton butcher workmen from picketing an anti-union concern, Judge E. C. Newcomb of that city said:

"The trade, good will and patronage of a plaintiff's established business is his private property."

If the court would turn to his dictionary he will find that property is defined:

"The exclusive right of possessing, enjoying and disposing of a thing; ownership; title."

The patronage that a business enjoys is not tangible. It can not be wrapped up and delivered to a buyer as is a commodity. It can be lost to a concern overnight. Only where labor is involved does an injunction judge dare deny that patronage can not be classed with a side of beef, fly paper, cheese or a barrel of oil.

These commodities are owned by the storekeeper. He has paid for them. The law protects his ownership of them.

If the public is so inclined they will purchase these commodities. They can cease patronizing the storekeeper for any reason or no reason. He has no property right in their patronage. He can not force them to do business with him.

When workers withdraw their patronage from this store, and urge their friends to do likewise, the injunction judge presents a theory that patronage is a property right just as is ownership of a commodity, and that interference with it can be enjoined.

If the injunction judge applied this theory to any other class of citizens he would be hooted off the bench.

As long as he confines his ruling to labor no protest is made by those who yet have a lingering belief that workers, somehow, have a serf status when involved in a controversy with employers.

To intelligently oppose the labor injunction, workers must understand the feudalistic mental attitude of injunction judges.

Workers must acquaint themselves with the difference between property—a tangible thing that a person owns—and patronage that is controlled by the individual who makes the purchase.

The public is confused over these two points, and therein lies the power of injunction judges. That is why they enjoin workers from even striking, or notifying the public that a strike exists.

An enlightened public opinion will sweep the ground from under injunction judges. Then they will be forced to use that writ as originally intended—for the protection of property, when the plaintiff has no other remedy at law.

The injunction writ was never intended to be used in personal relations or to interfere with man's liberty.

LABOR'S POLITICAL EFFORT, NEXT YEAR, WILL BE ALONG USUAL NO-PARTY PLAN

Washington, Aug. 8.—A vigorous participation by labor in the congressional elections of next year is called for in resolutions passed by the A. F. of L. executive council.

The usual non-partisan political policy of the organized labor movement will be adhered to.

Workers were reminded by the council that this policy "has passed through the crucible of experience and has proved to be the best plan for labor to voice itself politically."

State federations of labor, city central bodies, local unions and general and volunteer organizers will be called upon to make every preparation for next year's campaigns.

Following the A. F. of L. convention in Atlantic City, which convenes October 5, the council stated that it "will enter the various campaigns with the purpose of supporting those who can be depended upon to be true to the people, for if they are true to the people they will be true to labor."

"The people generally are beginning to realize that hide-bound partyism does not benefit them," the council said. "All too frequently they have learned that pledges in party platforms are not always respected, but were used as a stepping stone to office. The executive council believes that as a result of labor's non-partisan political policy the launching of third party movements has proved wasteful effort."

The council warned the people against political bosses and the effort to abolish the primary system in various states.

An educational campaign to aid non-partisan voters in marking long ballots, now so prevalent, will be launched. State and central bodies will be urged to study primary and election laws in their respective states, and special efforts will be made to interest women voters in the coming campaigns.

Living Wage Does Not Prevail; Millions Are Below Safety Line

Washington, Aug. 8.—The department of social action, National Catholic welfare council, contradicts an editorial expression by Collier's Weekly that "the wage struggle has been won," and that "no longer are men compelled to fight to obtain a living wage."

Collier's Weekly employs non-union printers and poses as an authority on labor questions. The department of social action quotes wage figures compiled by various government and private sources to sustain its claim that "great numbers of workingmen in the United States are not receiving wages enough to support a family in decent comfort."

The churchmen state that probably "one-half of the men who work for wages do not get a family living wage."

"About 200,000 section men on class-a-1 railroads last year made an average of $73 a month," the department says, in its weekly bulletin. "Approximately 5,600 extra gang men made $75 a month, 23,000 bridge and crossing tenders made $75 a month, 60,000 shop laborers made $80 a month. All of these worked an average of more than eight hours a day, and some more than that. None of them made a living wage. Their number is greatly increased, when other railroads are considered.

"Their wages were, for the most part, fixed by the railroad labor board on the basis of what is paid for similar work elsewhere. It is probable that the railroad labor board put the sum below what is paid in many other industries, but it did not miss the amount more than $20 or $30 a month.

"A year ago unskilled men in 23 factory industries were making an average of about $22 a week, according to a report of an employers' organization, the national industrial conference board. This is $4 or $5 a week more than the railroads gave unskilled labor, but it also is what is not a living wage. It is equivalent to about $650 a year in pre-war prices.

"A few months ago the United States bureau of labor statistics investigated a cross-section of wage and salary workers in 92 city industries and found that over one-half of the men who were heads of families made less than $1,250 a year, and about one-fourth made under $1,050 a year. More than 60 per cent of the men in the cotton industry got under $20 a week, according to the same bureau."

The department said there are 23,500,000 wage and salary workers in this country, all of whom are males.

"Relatively few of the laborers get $25 a week," the churchmen say. "Most of them get between $17.50 and $22.50 a week. Some receive less. Many classed as unskilled are in about the same position as regards wages.

In discussing women's wages, the social action department refers to a statement recently made by the Rev. John M. Cooper, D. D., of Catholic university:

"Our statistical data shows quite clearly that a very high percentage, probably between 33 per cent and 50 per cent of women in industry in the United States, are not receiving a living wage, even when the amount the living wage in cities of 50,000 or more at $15 and $16 a week, a wage I feel strongly falls short, would be sufficient at least for the high percentage of girls and women adrift."

GREEN'S MEXICAN NOTE GIVEN WIDE PUBLICITY

Washington, Aug. 8.—President Green's protest of Secretary of State Kellogg's recent belligerent note to Mexico has been heralded through every country south of the Rio Grande. Newspapers received at A. F. of L. headquarters indicate that the trade unionist's defense of Mexico is warmly received by the Latin-American countries.

Argentine newspapers, especially, feature the protest. In discussing a resolution in the Argentine national senate in support of President Calles of Mexico, and his reply to the Kellogg note, Senator Justo said:

"I believe, Mr. President, either to the welfare or the liberty of the North American people in the political course of Mexico. This is so true that the Buenos Aires papers of today print the declarations of the American Federation of Labor favorable to the government of Mexico and in opposition to the uncalled-for declarations of the North American government."

MILK TRUST JOKES

Denver, Aug. 8.—The milk trust in this city has raised prices 2 cents a quart because the farmers "are in a bad condition."

The farmers are making a desperate fight to secure a 1-cent increase from the milk trust.

PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN IS MAKING PROGRESS

Washington, Aug. 8.—Further details of the organization campaign of the A. F. of L. and the union label trades department were decided at a meeting of the department's executive board. The meeting was attended by President Green.

The first draft of the scenario was read. The story of the picture will be a story of humanity and its progress through trade union effort. It will show the difference between the union shop and the anti-union shop; the difference between autocracy and democracy in industry; how unorganized employes are coerced; how withdrawal requests to remedy grievances; how organized employes deal with employers through representatives the workers select.

The union label will be shown as a symbol for sanitary products and for manhood and womanhood.

The benefits of the eight-hour day will be emphasized, as will the struggle against child labor.

One important change in the program was made. Salaried officials of state federations of labor and city central bodies will be requested to serve the lecturers where the picture will be shown. Their familiarity with local conditions will add to the effectiveness of the campaign.

The routes of these publicity units will be made according to requests by labor officials in the various states. Requests are to be forwarded to John J. Manning, secretary-treasurer, union label trades department, A. F. of L. building.

DUNCAN GOES TO CANADA

Washington, Aug. 8.—Vice President James Duncan will represent the A. F. of L. at the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress convention.

Charles H. Moyer, president of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, was elected to this position at the last convention of the A. F. of L. Because of his resignation, Mr. Duncan was chosen by the A. F. of L. executive council.

APPEAL OIL DECISION

Cheyenne, Wyo., Aug. 8.—The government has appealed Federal Judge Kennedy's decision in the Teapot Dome oil case to the circuit court. The workers' Judge Kennedy upheld the naval oil lease of the Mammoth oil company, controlled by Harry F. Sinclair.

RENEW WAGE SCALE

Fresno, Cal., Aug. 8.—Local building trades craftsmen have renewed their agreements with employers. Three years ago an anti-union shop movement in this city was thrashed. The workers strengthened their lines and the war cloud disappeared.

PHOTO ENGRAVERS GAIN

Baltimore, Aug. 8.—Photo engravers have signed a three-year agreement with employers. Rates are increased $4 a week, or to $48, for two years and an additional $2 a week the third year.

Rockefeller Miners Are Again Duped; Company "Union" Approves Wage Cut

Denver, Aug. 8.—The company "union" of the Rockefeller Colorado fuel and iron company is used by the management to again reduce wages. Officers of the "union" are circulating a petition that the company reduce wages 15 per cent "to meet competition" in its mine production.

Last March wages were lowered 20 per cent with the approval of the state industrial commission. The workers were then told that competition made this policy necessary. Later the company said it was impossible to meet competition because of discriminatory freight rates. The interstate commerce commission adjusted rates to the company's satisfaction.

But the company is still dissatisfied. It has discovered that the "competition" cry brings results, and it is again using this plea, while its hand-picked "union" directs the fight for a wage rate that will equal the low 1917 scale.

The company's scandalous policy of continually deceiving its employes has silenced every champion of company "unionism" in this state.

The organized workers are asking the duped employes when will they wake up.

WORKERS' ACTIVITY WORRIES UNION FOES

Omaha, Neb., Aug. 8.—The business men's association of this city is alarmed over the organizing and union label campaign of the A. F. of L. and its union labor trades department. In a letter to members, the secretary of this anti-union organization warns all friends of the "American plan" that they "should be constantly on their guard" against efforts to extend the union shop and collective bargaining in this city.

"This campaign is not a bluff," says the secretary. He does not conceal his worry that organized workers are awakening to their purchasing power and their determination to spend their money for products made under union conditions.

Local business men are truthfully informed that "the demand for the union label is a form of protest against goods made under anti-union conditions.

"Every special consideration shown the organized workers of Omaha, the secretary says, "is a direct blow to the greater number of the unorganized."

The Unionist, local trade union publication, says that the letter is "a frank acknowledgment by our foe of the wonderful effectiveness of the union label as an industrial weapon."

RUSSIA IS CLASSED AS "INCITER OF WAR"

Williamsport, Mass., Aug. 8.—Soviet Russia was classed as an "inciter of war" by William R. Castle, jr., chief of the division of western European affairs, department of state, speaking before the institute of politics.

Mr. Castle declared that the administration is opposed to the recognition of soviet Russia or the extension of American loans to that country. This statement is significant because Professor George H. Blakeslee of Clark university pointed out that Mr. Castle had immediate supervision of the European policy of the United States for many years.

Mr. Castle said that the assertion of those who attempt to differentiate between the activities of the soviet government and the third internationale has been proved wrong. It is now clearly understood, he said, that the soviet government and the third internationale are only the right and left hand of the same organism.

Insisting that our policy must always remain thoroughly American, based on the fundamental interests of the United States, he said:

"Only sentimentalists will find fault with the government for this attitude, because only they could seriously suggest that the American people elect their president primarily to promote the interests of other countries. The first duty of any government is the protection and promotion of the permanent interests of this country by the government is best for the world at large."

Declaring that the Russian government has employed agents to stir up trouble in the United States, Mr. Castle said that the European nations have gained little by recognition of the soviets except an army of propagandists who attempt to undermine the government whose guests they are.

A. F. OF L. CONDEMNS PENNSYLVANIA ROAD

Washington, Aug. 8.—The Pennsylvania railroad was condemned by the A. F. of L. executive council because of its anti-union attitude. Evidence was submitted that employes are blacklisted and a company spy system maintained and wages "adjusted" to suit the management.

The charges were made by officials of the Pennsylvania railroad system and unanimously approved by the A. F. of L. railway employes' department. The executive council will refer the strike of these workers, and the attitude of the company, to the Atlantic City convention of the A. F. of L.

For several years this railroad has conducted an anti-union campaign against employes who have endeavored to equalize wages and improve working conditions.

Every attempt of trade unionists employed by this railroad to select representatives in wage negotiations has been blocked by the management. The United States railroad labor board has repeatedly ruled that the company is violating the transportation act, but the company has assumed the position that it is above law.

BORAH TO LAY CHINA'S CASE BEFORE SENATE

Boise, Idaho, Aug. 8.—The Chinese situation will be brought before the senate at the next session of congress, Senator Borah declared in an address here.

"I will do so not because I want trouble, but because it is the only way to prevent trouble," the chairman of the senate foreign relations committee said. "The attitude of the foreign powers toward China is keeping that nation from progressing and maintaining order. Unless the foreign governments conform to new conditions, respect the territorial rights of China, treat Chinese labor with justice, and give the government revenue upon which she can live, we are going to have a condition in the Orient which every one who loves peace will regret."

CHILD LABOR BILL GAINS

Atlanta, Aug. 8.—The child labor bill passed by the house has been approved by a senate committee. The bill is an improvement over the present law, and its success so far, trade unionists declare, can be traced to the agitation for the federal child labor amendment.

PRISON LABOR SPEEDS UP

New York, Aug. 8.—Even convicts do not escape the drive for speed-up. Commissioner Lawes, according to Robert T. Kent, state superintendent of prisons, in a luncheon speech here. He said that since payment of wages to prisoners had been suggested production has increased greatly. The wage incentive is also expected to put the prisoners, under the prison shops, he explained, that they will better meet the needs of the $40,000,000 market available in the state, county and city institutions.

In this state the product of prison labor is sold to public institutions.

STATE UNIONS TO MEET

San Diego, Cal., Aug. 8.—The annual convention of the California state federation of labor will convene in this city on Monday, September 21.

OPERATORS DEMAND PROFITS ON TONS OF WATERED STOCK

Pittsburgh, Pa., Aug. 8.—The Pittsburgh coal company, which has repudiated its agreement with the United Mine Workers, is capitalized at $80,000,000. One-half of this is water.

The United States coal commission has reported that this corporation had its coal and other lands in the Pittsburgh district appraised in 1917 by mining engineers. The commission said that "the values set upon such lands was probably several hundred per cent in excess of the actual cost of such land."

These facts are included in a letter to the Pittsburgh chamber of commerce by Philip Murray, vice president of the United Mine Workers. The business men, true to their traditional union-busting policy, called on the miners to repudiate their Jacksonville agreement. The Pittsburgh coal company is the dominant factor in the Pittsburgh coal producing association.

"It is a well-known fact," said Vice President Murray, "that the chronic ills underlying the bituminous coal industry are to be found in its present state of over-development, over-capitalization and over-manned. A conservative estimate of the excess number of men in this industry is approximately 200,000."

The trade unionist pointed out that this country has a potential coal producing capacity of twice the people's need.

"You will, therefore, see that under present conditions the best that the mine workers can hope to secure is about half time. Lower wage rates will neither increase the opportunity for employment nor will they increase the consumption of coal."

Mr. Murray suggested that the chamber of commerce contribute something of a constructive nature to remedy this situation rather than favor "unjustifiable wage degradations."

INJUNCTION JUDGE WOULD COVER WORLD

Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 8.—In appealing to the supreme court against an injunction issued by Judge Roettinger of the Hamilton county common pleas court, Cincinnati, organized butcher workmen declared that this injunction judge "would cover the world."

Roettinger perpetually enjoined the unionists from picketing a struck plant. He fined the president of one of the unions $100, and assessed the union a like amount.

Commenting on Roettinger's action, the unionists, in their petition, say that the court apparently believed that his injunction "was so far-reaching as to embrace the whole world, or at least any inhabitant of the world who might be forced to admit that he had done the forbidden things, regardless of his lack of knowledge of the issuance of the order."

PROBE TEXTILE PROFITS

Washington, Aug. 8.—An investigation of textile profits was ordered by the A. F. of L. executive council, at its quarterly meeting in this city.

The council indorsed President Green's protest to textile manufacturers against the recent 10 per cent wage reduction.

ANTI-UNION PACKERS BOW TO STRONG UNION

Chicago, Aug. 8.—Anti-union employers shift their position very quickly when they are confronted by a 100 per cent organization of workers.

This is shown by a recent advertisement in which the Armour corporation, meat packers, asked for bricklayers, "union only."

The Armour concern treats its unorganized butcher workmen different. It maintains a company "union," a spy system, and advises other employers to buy Christmas turkeys—sold by Armour—for its workers.

"Armour & Co. wants the union bricklayer, but it does not want the union packing house worker," says Dennis Lane, editor of the Butcher Workman. "In actuality it does not want either, but might compels the employment of the union bricklayer. This is medieval 'paternalism' idea controls this concern. It bows to it. As long as the 'might-is-right' idea is the prevailing psychology of Armour & Co., and justice is not considered, workers in the meat industry, as a matter of self-preservation, must otherwise than support the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen.

"The big packers has unintentionally once again supplied evidence that the measure and influence of an organization is measured by the size of its membership."

Pussy-Foot Communists Exposed; Advises To "Bore From Within"

New York, Aug. 8.—Morris Sigman, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union, has made public two documents issued by the workers' communist party of America which again prove the oft-repeated charge that these revolutionists are attempting to capture or disrupt the trade union movement.

Communists in the trade unions are given a cautious hint to be less interested in working conditions, but "to have uppermost in our minds the political significance of the struggle." These communists are advised that when they function in the unions their revolutionary program must be based "upon the political level" of the rank and file in that union. Or in other words, it is not wise to appear too revolutionary in unions that are more interested in improving conditions than in listening to revolutionary orators.

One of the documents is a letter signed by E. R. Browder, acting secretary of the central executive committee of the workers' party of America, which he says "the central executive committee has found it necessary to openly take issue with, and fight against, the ultra right wing tendency in our work in the needle trades centering in New York."

The letter also contains recommendations to New York communists in their fight against the garment workers' union, which expelled from office more than two score members because of communist activities.

The central executive committee of the workers' party mildly censures their New York members—the disciplined garment workers—for condoning the revolutionary tactics of the trade union educational league.

The committee says:

"In the trade unions, the communists through the trade union educational league, as communists, must strive to fill the most important strategic positions in the unions. In the struggle between the left wing and the reactionary officialdom, we must always have uppermost in our minds the political significance of the struggle.

"To capture official positions in the unions is good, but this is not certain. Any candidate, pro-communist or left wing, running against the bureaucrats in unions, must do so as a definite left wing program of action. How revolutionary these programs of action will be depends, of course, upon the political level of the rank and file of each particular union or industry.

"This meeting (of the central executive committee) reaffirms the correctness of the workers' party policy in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union and declares its readiness to carry on a militant fight in the union along the lines of these policies. We further call upon the national committee of the needle trades section, trade union educational league, to inaugurate a militant national campaign to execute and put into effect these party policies."

Welfare Plan No Part Of Wages; Is Industry Charge, Car Men Say

Detroit, Mich., Aug. 8.—In the future organized street car men will sign no wage contract which does not provide that employers must assess themselves for welfare schemes. The street car men will also insist that old age pensions, sick and accident benefits and other welfare plans shall be a charge on the industry, and shall be borne by the public.

Local unions of the street car men will be instructed to have these provisions in future wage agreements.

It is believed that this will cause employers to become less interested in welfare work, and that higher wages will permit these workers to maintain their own benefits.

The new plan is the result of a year's investigation by the general executive board of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electrical Railway Employes. The investigation revealed that in a few cases employers bore the entire cost of these welfare schemes, but other employers collected from 1 to 3 per cent from workers, often without their consent.

"Under the mind," the general executive board said, "that where bona fide organization of employes does not exist, the cost of these schemes is now borne by wages, and the workers are paying dearly in inadequate wage rates and inferior labor conditions. There are companies with which our local divisions have contracts that had imposed these insurance benefit schemes upon our members without consulting the organization, and have ... the employes to jointly contribute in paying the cost. Our members had nothing to say in establishing the insurance, bargaining its terms or cost, or the sums, if any, they should contribute to this cost. This is not democracy in industry. The employes are supposed to be the direct beneficiaries of this insurance, bearing part of the expense and should therefore have a say in its establishment.

"As well might we leave the fixing of our wage rates and labor conditions of the collective bargaining principle and without mutual agreement expressed by contract as to permit them to establish and control the protection that is due us from the industry. This protection is our right, as much as adequate wage rates and proper conditions of labor are our right, and we should insist upon full recognition of the collective bargaining principle and the signed contract to protect all of these rights."